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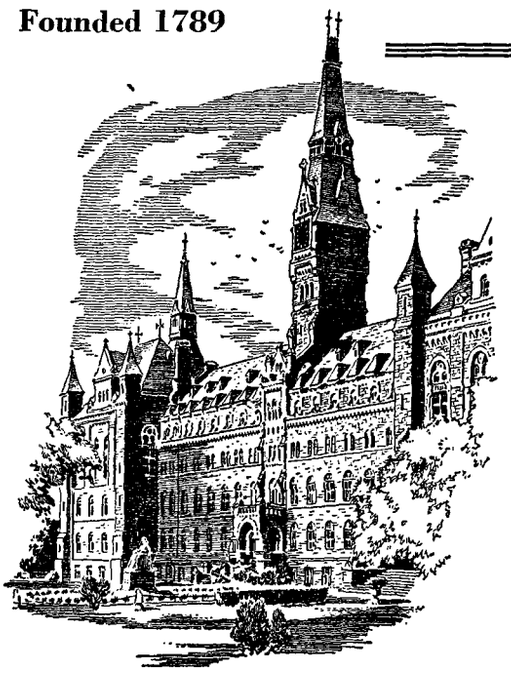

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Editor
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Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

Contributing Editors
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JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

TOWARD DISARMAMENT?

AT A TIME when almost no corner of the world is free from inner turmoil and outward threat, President Eisenhower has introduced, with his latest letter to Premier Nikita Khrushchev, almost the lone note of hope. Although it would be foolish to anticipate the outcome of the proposed talks with a high optimism, the President's statement that the United States is prepared to begin technical talks on policing the suspension of nuclear tests suggests that the long-standing disarmament impasse may be broken.

Russia's recent unilateral suspension of large-scale test explosions and our subsequent nuclear tests have provided a focus for all the anxieties, fears and arguments that are aroused by the production of modern nuclear weapons. The strong demand for the cessation of our thermonuclear tests in the Pacific did not come from pacifists only. It flowed partially from a general dissatisfaction with the policies of the present Administration, from a feeling that political and economic measures were being sacrificed in favor of military efforts. But it was based also on the insistent if inconclusive scientific evidence that each large explosion added to the toll of future victims of leukemia and bone cancer. It was based, further, on the desire to ward off a future in which even small countries and unstable governments would have control of ultimate weapons, a future in which the world would be on that steep slope of violence which ends in total destruction.

There is scarcely a thinking citizen who is not aware of the terrible alternatives open to us, and events of recent weeks strengthen rather than weaken his fears. Contemporary history is too jolting and too rapid to allow even the dubious pleasures of complacency. The explosion of the Nike installation in New Jersey, which the army safeguards were to have rendered as safe as a "filling station," raised again the possibilities of an accidental nuclear explosion even under the best conditions and the closest supervision. Nor can it be reassuring to allies who have accepted American installations. Even more distressing is the thought of a future in which even thermonuclear weapons would be controlled by countries riding on uncertain waves of nationalism or by countries threatened by civil wars and revolution.

THESE ARE the rationally prompted fears which attend any discussion of nuclear weapons and disarmament, and they are caused by real problems which a realistic policy must encompass. It would be pleasant to think that a unilateral suspension of tests and a reduction in arms would lessen the tension and dangers which now exist, but history provides no easy warrant for such a conclusion. The theory that an arms race is a symptom not a cause of tension is still impressive. And on the basis of this theory we—and the Russians—have continued to build military strength. Yet Winston Churchill's reliance on a "balance of terror" seems every day less dependable; the terrors which are balanced grow daily greater and the balance itself becomes more precarious.

Given the prevailing conditions, it would be easy but fatal to sink into an apathetic, hopeless acceptance of these conditions, to think that the world must be committed to chaos. It was one of Harold Stassen's greatest virtues as disarmament adviser to the President that no discouragement stopped his continued efforts to reach some area of agreement, to make some progress toward the goal of disarmament. It is the great merit of President Eisenhower's letter that it offers a realistic, constructive approach to possible agreements con-

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cerning disarmament. It is limited; if the President's proposal is accepted it will lead, at most, to knowledge about how disarmament agreements, and nuclear tests, could be controlled and supervised. It is realistic; the conclusions the study reaches would not prejudice "our respective positions on the timing and interdependence of various aspects of disarmament." It is practical; a time limit for the study is suggested and the appropriate disarmament groups in the United Nations would be informed of the progress of the talks.

At their best the talks suggested by the President's letter could lead to a step-by-step agreement on the larger questions of disarmament and nuclear tests. There are increasing reports that Secretary of State Dulles now favors the views previously advocated by Mr. Stassen and is willing to consider parts of our disarmament package in isolation from other important aspects. If this view were to be predominant it could lead to limited but real agreement. At the least the talks should give the United States a diplomatic advantage, and they would not foreclose the possibility of a unilateral suspension of tests by the United States. In the matter of nuclear disarmament the best that can be accomplished may not be enough, but we must welcome the attempts that are made.

RACISM IN NEW YORK

ONLY LAST WEEK we commented on President Eisenhower's counsel of "patience and forbearance" to American Negroes in the matter of securing civil rights. Recognizing the obvious value of these virtues in any and all human affairs, we nevertheless questioned the fairness of such a recommendation to citizens who have been denied their full rights for almost a hundred years, who have even today, four long years after their legal victory in the Supreme Court, achieved so little in their struggle for equality in education alone.

To offer the Negro citizen no advice but resignation in his campaign for simple justice is almost to mock the many generations of Negro forbearance; it is to ignore the history of his efforts to win his civil rights, bit by bit, always painfully, met at worst by hatred and at best, too often, by nothing more than counsels of patience. It is no wonder that American Negroes should on occasion react with anger and bitterness, no wonder that demagogues should try to exploit their frustration; it is surprising only that they have yielded to hatred and rage as rarely as they have.

Now, unhappily, Negroes in New York are faced with a new test of their maturity and fortitude. Rep. Adam Clayton Powell of New York, indicted for income tax evasion and repudiated by the Democratic Party for bolting to the Eisenhower camp in 1956, has tainted his legal and political contests with a crude and inflammatory racism.

A recent "non-partisan" rally in New York's Harlem, sponsored by the N.A.A.C.P., was turned into something very near a racist demonstration by Mr. Powell's threats and accusations. Explaining his recent reverses in court and within his political organization as somehow dependent on questions of race, Mr. Powell charged that the United States was a "white man's country," that his Negro political opponents were all "Uncle Toms," that Carmine De Sapio, New York Tammany leader, was a "Mississippi boss," trying to change "Harlem into Mississippi." He warned Mr. De Sapio and Manhattan Borough President Hulan E. Jack, himself a Negro, to avoid "walking up and down the streets of Harlem."

It is reassuring to learn of the quick condemnation of these tactics by the N.A.A.C.P., which said, "We deplore and dissociate ourselves from the banner of extreme racialism raised by Mr. Powell. . . . We cannot condemn racism in others while using it ourselves." And, leaving aside the political questions between him and Rep. Powell, we agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Hulan Jack, who condemned the injection of racial enmity into politics as likely to "lead only to disaster."

What is not so reassuring, however, is the loud and belligerent support Mr. Powell has received from many Harlem Negroes, as well as the refusal of local Republican leaders to oppose him—on racial grounds—in his bid for independent reelection. The eyes of the nation will be upon New York's Negroes in this newest trial. We hope, in sympathy and concern, that they will resist the trap of demagoguery, of all-too-easy racial bitterness, which can indeed "lead only to disaster."

THE FRENCH RISING

HISTORICAL PARALLELS impart to several ingredients in the French crisis a certain ominous ring: a revolt of army officers in North Africa; Committees of Public Safety; Corsica itself. How account for the present situation of the government of France and the emergence of General De Gaulle?

When French officers in Algeria took things

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into their own hands and set up their own authority, their support was local. It comprised French settlers in Algeria fearful of a settlement with the Algerian nationalists and a number of Moslems believed to have been hand-picked. Within France itself the insurgents could hope to make little headway on their own account; their only chance was to call upon De Gaulle to take over.

Charles De Gaulle is not supposed to hold with the extreme colonialist views of the officers who have invoked his name. But here, if ever, was the the long-awaited historic moment at which he could be called upon to save the French nation. After years of continuous decline and governmental weakness it seemed that at last he could strengthen the central government and restore French prestige. (To many others the army rising in Algeria means even further national decline.)

Aside from greater government authority little is known about the lineaments of any De Gaulle program. To some the General embodies the only alternative to wholesale disorder—even though he has accepted insubordination of the army to make his bid for power. In World War II his was an historic role; his is a magic name to kindle popular enthusiasm (as well as opposition). And his record indicates that he is not just another politician.

There was a time when opposition to the accession of De Gaulle was enough to bring together not only the French Communists and Socialists but also most other political groups. Of late the Fourth Republic has shown itself so inept—and it has so tragically miscalculated in the bloody wars of Indochina and Algeria—that more people are now willing to give the General a chance to see what he can do. They are resigned to giving him this chance in ignorance of his intended policies because they have been persuaded that only he can save France.

In the midst of these upheavals and anxieties the French hierarchy called for a "day of prayers for peace" throughout France. Cardinal Feltin of Paris urged "respect for legitimate institutions" upon French Catholics and referred to the Algerian situation by denouncing "the exaggeration of a narrow nationalism, which does not take into account the obligations of fraternity that men must have for each other, no matter of whatever race or nationality they may be." This serves as a reminder that even if De Gaulle is to exercise power by constitutional means and France is not paralyzed by the obstructions of a new Popular Front, colonial and other problems which have so beset the declining Fourth Republic will still have to be met.

FOOD STORE SWEETHEARTS

THE CHARGES made by the Senate rackets committee against the A. & P. food store chain and the Butchers Union are serious. Senator John L. McClellan of Arkansas said the committee "was forced to the inevitable conclusion" that the company and the union "deprived more than ten thousand employees of their right . . . to be represented by a collective bargaining agent of their own choice." Evidence presented to the committee, he said, showed the company "cooerced and intimidated its employees" to persuade them to join this particular union rather than another. In return, he said, the union entered into a secret agreement with the company to preserve the forty-five hour week for almost five years rather than insist on a forty hour week—with advantages "measurable in millions of dollars," as Sen. McClellan pointed out.

As of this writing, the Senate committee is planning to press forward with an investigation of other phases of the Butchers Union. This is clearly as it should be, and we hope too that this will not be the end of the A. & P. matter, even though company spokesmen insist their conduct in handling this matter was "legal and proper." It is too often forgotten that many racketeers hiding behind labor union titles got where they are precisely because some employers found it financially advantageous to enter into such "sweetheart contracts" with them.

UNCLOUDED CRYSTAL BALL

WE HAVE been sitting here mulling over a newspaper story based on a report from the Population Reference Bureau in Washington. According to the story, "the nation's birthrate has been taking a steady nose dive since November, when the recession began to develop." In January, it seems, there were one thousand fewer births than in the same month in 1957; in February, two thousand fewer than a year ago; and in March, the last month reported, four thousand fewer than in the previous year. All this we are willing to take on faith, but we're puzzled nonetheless. If the recession began to develop in November, how could it show up in a decreased birth rate two, three and four months later? We have counted off on our fingers several times, and on the basis of an economic dip in November the earliest month *we* could have predicted a drop in the birth rate would be next August. Has something happened we don't know about?

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Morality and Nuclear War

Such is human folly that a war begun in restraint is likely to end in uncontrolled and therefore immoral violence

by L. L. McREAVY

THERE IS nothing sacrosanct about the integrity of the atom. In themselves, therefore, nuclear explosives which release the energy of the atom by splitting it are neither morally good nor morally bad. But, like most other products of human ingenuity, they can be put to morally bad purposes. The question is: are they morally permissible as weapons of war?

To answer this question rationally, it is necessary first to examine the criteria which determine what is and what is not morally justifiable in warfare generally. The principle which alone justifies a sovereign State in going to war at all is the principle of legitimate self-defense. It can be expressed as follows: the state, like the individual, when it is attacked in any of its essential rights by an unjust and violent aggressor, may defend itself, as far as is necessary, by proportionately violent means. It would take too long to establish this principle in detail. It is sufficient, for the present, to observe that to deny it is to put a premium on ruthlessness and to undermine the foundations of social and international order; in short, it is to establish in the world the reign of the thug.

But there are two important limitations to this principle of legitimate self-defense which are especially relevant to the question of nuclear warfare. The first is that the end does not justify the means, in other words, that you may never do anything that is morally evil in order that good may come of it. Now it is morally evil to kill or mutilate a fellow man, except in so far as God, sole Lord and Master of human life, permits it, and He cannot reasonably be presumed to permit it, except in so far as it is the only adequate means of defending yourself against an aggressor who seeks *unjustly* to inflict a similar injury on you.

The operative word is "unjustly." The whole principle of legitimate self-defense is based on the supposition that your opponent is attacking you unjustly. It follows therefore that you may never *directly* seek to kill or maim the innocent, i.e., those who have no part in the unjust aggression which it is your object to repel. There are occasions in which you may be justified in attacking the guilty in a way which you foresee may *indirectly* affect the innocent, but you may never attack the guilty *through* the innocent; you may never make the innocent the direct and immediate object of your attack, even as a means of deterring the guilty.

So, for example, if a murderous ruffian draws a revolver in order to shoot me, and the only adequate means of defending myself is to shoot back, I am morally entitled to do so, even though I foresee that my bullet may unfortunately wound or kill his child, who happens to be standing close to him. But in no circumstances may I shoot directly to kill the child, even though I happen to know that it will prove the most effective means of making this particular ruffian desist from his attack. The child, not being an active partner in the unjust aggression, retains his personal inviolability from direct attack, and I am morally bound to respect it.

So, too, in the recent world war, our airmen were justified in bombing the enemy's troop trains and factories, even when they foresaw that children, invalids and old people in the vicinity might be indirectly involved. Troop trains and war factories were part and parcel of the enemy's unjust aggression and were therefore legitimate military objectives. But our airmen would not have been justified in *directly* attacking schools and hospitals, even if they had been assured that it would be a most effective means of breaking the

This article is printed by arrangement with the London *Tablet*. Father McReavy, who is Professor of Moral Theology and Canon Law at Ushaw, writes: "This article is not presented as a thorough and exhaustive treatment of the problem. It is the text of a paper designed to help intelligent people who have had no special training in moral science to judge the issue in the light of sound moral principles."

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enemy's morale. That would have meant doing evil that good might come of it; and once you allow such a principle, the whole fabric of the moral order inevitably crumbles.

That then is the first important limitation to the principle of self-defense: you may not *directly* attack the innocent, even as a means of getting at the guilty. Reciprocal violence may be immediately directed only against the violent. But there is a second important limitation, namely, that even against a violent and unjust aggressor violence must be used with restraint. Physical violence is not morally wrong in itself, otherwise dentists and the like would have to go out of business. But it is always at least a physical evil, and therefore its use must be moderated by reason. To use it unnecessarily, or in greater measure than is reasonably necessary to the attainment of a legitimate end, is morally wrong. It offends against the primary law of morality, which is the law of reason.

So, for example, a parent may justifiably spank his child for stealing the jam, but he is not allowed to cut off the child's hands, even though that would be a much more effective way of preventing further stealing. Similarly, our airmen were justified in destroying the enemies' factories with as much violence as was reasonably necessary to the attainment of their legitimate end. But to have then proceeded, of set purpose and not merely as an indirect consequence of the destruction of the factories, to demolish the houses in which the workers lived and machine-gun them as they ran to safety would have been a disproportionate use of violence and morally wrong.

The munition workers of an unjustly aggressive nation cannot indeed claim the immunity which children and invalids rightly claim. They have lost it by their cooperation in the injustice, and therefore their slaughter would not be direct killing of the innocent. But they are still not on quite the same plane as combatants. They help the front-line soldier to kill, but they do not themselves kill. And as there are degrees in the aggression, so there must be degrees in the violence that may lawfully be used to repress it.

It is reasonable to use lethal weapons against those who use them, to shoot the unjust shooters, because that is the only effective way of stopping them, but it does not follow that you may do the same to the war-workers, the music-while-you-workers, the propagandists, the savings-groupers and comfort-knitters, on the ground that they are all cooperating in greater or lesser degree with the shooters. As a rule, the adequate answer to the munition-worker is to destroy his works, and if it is the adequate answer, it is the only legitimate answer. One may use as much violence against an unjust aggressor as is reasonably necessary to self-defense. To go beyond that limit is disproportionate, unreasonable, wrong.

THESE TWO LIMITATIONS to the principle of self-defense are especially relevant to the question of nuclear warfare. There can be new moral problems in this rapidly changing world, but no new moral principles; there is therefore no need to look for new yardsticks.

The same principles hold good today as in the days of the bow and arrow, and no argument of sentiment or expediency can unseat them. In itself, the nuclear bomb is no more immoral than the cartridge, and it must be judged by essentially the same principles. Like the cartridge, it is simply a lethal weapon, and, given a legitimate target to which it is reasonably proportioned, it can, like the cartridge, be lawfully used in self-defense. The difference between the two weapons is that, whereas there are plenty of legitimate targets for the cartridge, there are very few in this crowded world to which so enormously destructive a weapon as the atomic bomb can ever be counted proportionate, and fewer, if any, to which the thermonuclear H-bomb can be counted proportionate. And, as we have seen, proportionate use of violence is of the very essence of the principle of legitimate self-defense in war.

But though the very magnitude of the weapon reduces the number of legitimate targets to which the nuclear bomb can be reasonably said to be proportionate, it would be difficult to prove apodictively that there can never be such a target. Indeed, we are assured that tactical warheads have already been devised, which can be used on limited targets. If it can be lawful to obliterate an enemy fleet or fortress by a thousand shells, surely it can be lawful to achieve this same effect by a single nuclear explosive; the only difference is that the former method gives the enemy time to surrender before the full weight of repressive violence has been brought to bear on them. Indeed, one can conceive a case in which it might be legitimately used against a town. But, unless we are to abandon moral principles altogether and be guided solely by military expediency, it would have to be a very special kind of town, one which not merely contained legitimate military objectives, but was itself, in its entirety, a military objective, one to which, moreover, a nuclear explosive was the only adequate answer.

Such towns, however, are exceptional. Indeed, the only example we can suggest is one specially built for the manufacture of offensive weapons, as the Americans built Oak Ridge in Tennessee solely for the manufacture of the first atomic bombs. Our practical concern must always be with predominantly civilian centers, such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and here, it would seem, our verdict must be different.

In both these towns, the use of the atomic bomb would seem to have involved the violation of the two basic principles on which we have insisted above: first, the direct slaughter of tens of thousands of innocent

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people (children, old folk, invalids, etc.) who had no part in the Japanese aggression; and secondly, the use against the rest of the civilian population of a degree of violence which bore no proportion to their share in the national aggression. At Hiroshima, according to the report of the British Mission issued in July, 1946, four square miles were destroyed by blast or fire and eighty thousand were killed. No matter how ardent the civilian population of that town were in supporting their national war effort, it is surely no exaggeration to call such a deluge of death and destruction disproportionate.

IT may be objected that the difference between the nuclear bomb and the blockbuster of the late war, considered as lethal weapons, is merely a difference of degree, not of kind; that the atomic bomb, or even the H-bomb, is simply what we used airily to call "a bigger and better bomb," in the trigger-happy days at the end of the last war; and if the 22,000 pound bomb was lawful, why not the nuclear bomb? The answer is that, from the moral point of view, a big enough difference of degree can effect a difference of kind, and, when the target is a predominantly civilian town, it does effect a difference of kind.

The airman may lawfully aim a blockbuster at a factory block, because the factory is a legitimate objective and the weapon is proportioned to it, and therefore any effects it may have outside the target area can reasonably be said to be accidental and unintended. But the atomic bomb, and even more so the H-bomb, is not just a blockbuster. It is a town-buster; and though a Hiroshima may contain many legitimate targets of attack, the town, as a town, is not a legitimate target.

When you release a nuclear bomb over a predominantly civilian town, you cannot reasonably claim that you intend only the destruction of its war potential and regret the slaughter of the tens of thousands of civilians in it, any more than an anti-Liberal fanatic who blows up the House of Commons in full session can claim that his only direct intention is to destroy the handful of Liberal members. The direct and immediate effect of a town-buster is to destroy the town, with everything in it, factories and hospitals, workers and wives, infants and infantry, all with the same impartial directness. In my opinion, therefore, it is impossible to hold that a predominantly civilian town can ever be a legitimate target for so indiscriminate a weapon as a nuclear bomb, without first abandoning the principles of morality in self-defense and substituting the principle of expediency.

Those who remember *Alf's Button,* a tale of the first world war, will recall that the genie who obediently appeared whenever Alf rubbed his button was "too bloomin' 'olesale" in carrying out Alf's commands. That, from the moralist's point of view, is the dominant consideration in regard to nuclear weapons. The forms with which we are hitherto familiar, both the atomic bombs dropped on Japan and the immensely more fearsome H-bomb exploded at Bikini, are far too wholesale, unselective and indiscriminate in their violence to be justifiable as normal weapons of self-defense.

According to the Washington correspondent of the *Times,* March 22nd, 1958, the United States has developed nuclear explosive devices so small as to be capable of being handled by single agents operating behind enemy lines. It is assumed that the nuclear explosion resulting from them is of low yield; indeed, according to Professor Orear, in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists,* it can be kept "as small as that of a fire-cracker." But it is difficult to believe that, once the battle to the death is engaged on a major scale, the attack will be limited to "fire-crackers" and other controllable explosions of low yield, while the indiscriminate Bikini-type bombs remain in storage. In war, what is possible tends to become actual. We have reason therefore to fear that a thermonuclear war would speedily degenerate into a competition of frightfulness, uncontrolled and uncontrollable.

If that should happen, there would be no further moral problem to discuss. To quote from the papal address to the Eighth Congress of the World Medical Association assembled in Rome, September 30th, 1954: "If the evil consequences of adopting this method of warfare should ever become so extensive as to pass utterly beyond the control of man, its use would have to be rejected as immoral. It would be no longer a question of defense against injustice and necessary protection of legitimate possessions, but of the annihilation, pure and simple, of all human life within the affected area. That is not permitted on any title."

THE CONCLUSIONS to which these considerations would seem to lead are as follows:

(1) A just war, even on a major scale, is still possible. Pope Pius XII said as much, in his address of October 3rd, 1953, and in his Christmas message of 1956, though he indicated that it would have to be a defensive war, occasioned by an extreme situation in which the fundamental values of human life were at stake, undertaken after all available means of peaceful settlement had been tried in vain, and having a reasonable chance of achieving its just purpose without provoking even greater evils.

(2) However unlikely of fulfilment these conditions may seem to be, given that a just war of self-defense is still possible, the state is morally justified, indeed bound, to take adequate measures to defend its vital interests; and since, at least in theory, there can be legitimate targets even for the major nuclear weapons (e.g. a large hostile force, conveniently, if improbably, concentrated), it is morally entitled to construct such

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weapons as deterrents, and indeed to test their efficiency, unless the genetic risks of such tests outweigh their utility.

(3) In no circumstances, not even to save the Western world from being swamped by atheistic Communism, will it ever be lawful to explode indiscriminate nuclear weapons of the major type on predominantly civilian centers of population, because direct killing of the innocent can never be justified except by the direct intervention of God Himself.

(4) One cannot, *a priori,* exclude the possibility of a nuclear war being fought with controlled nuclear devices, restricted to military targets, because neither side stands to gain anything by resorting to all-out violence with the moral certainty of bringing the same upon itself. Such, however, is human folly, that a war begun in restraint is very likely to end in uncontrolled and therefore immoral violence, even on the part of the just defender. Hence, the only practical solution of the moral problem created by these beastly devices is an effective international agreement, implemented by a system of control which will ensure that they are never used. Concerted efforts to this end by all lovers of peace, pacifist and non-pacifist, are likely to be more profitable than vain debates about the morality of war in our nuclear age.

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

Television in Britain

by J. L. BENVENISTI

EVER SINCE we were first invaded by the thing, thoughtful Britons have regarded television with something like grandmotherly apprehension. And as the number of T.V. owners has risen from one million in 1952 to nearly eight times that number today, the subject of its effects has had a compulsive fascination for the more despondent types of publicist and journalist.

That there should be much journalistic preoccupation with a medium that engrosses so much of every advanced nation's waking consciousness is natural enough in any country. In Britain, however, the problem thus posed has a special and peculiar relevance. We have during the past ten years been making huge efforts to rebuild—and to extend—our educational system, and this not only with a view to keeping technically competitive among the nations but for more intangible reasons.

More than any other nation we live by trade, which means that we live by the confidence the rest of the world has in us and that we depend in a quite special way on the opinion foreigners form of the good sense, far-sightedness and moderation of quite ordinary British people. Desirable as it may be that we should become a nation of super-technicians, it is even more necessary that we should become a nation of adults, or at any rate that nothing should cause us to become less adult than we are.

That being so, it is not hard to see why so many people in Britain should be inquiring—and doing so a little more uneasily than people in other countries—just what television is doing to us and in particular what it is doing to our children. It is not hard to understand that there should be a growing spate of articles, inquiries, surveys and the like, the most important of these last being the survey by Mr. Geoffrey Gorer, assisted by a leading advertising agency here, which under the title "Television and Our Lives" has recently been published as a series of articles in the London Sunday *Times.*

Mr. Gorer's findings are undeniably disquieting, particularly his estimate of the number of "Television Addicts," people, that is to say, who watch for more than twenty-five hours a week and "whose lives are almost completely restricted to working, sleeping, eating and watching" and are thus completely devoid of any other interest whatsoever. These people are estimated to constitute one-sixth of the total television audience—which means that they constitute about one-seventh of the entire nation.

When we take into account that the maximum concentration of television sets is, according to Mr. Gorer, among the parents of young children (which means presumably that the maximum concentration of "addicts" is to be found in this group) and that even where we are not concerned with addicts, television has a demonstrably adverse effect on reading, social life, hobbies and other forms of minor creative activity—

Mr. Benvenisti, a regular contributor to The Commonweal, is a British economist and writer.

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and quite definitely on church-going—it is at first difficult to believe that this medium does not have an adverse effect on the growth of personality in general and on education in particular.

It seems to be tolerably well established that prolonged exposure to the television screen has on many people a mild hypnotic effect. The question arises whether it is really a good thing for young people to spend much longer periods of their waking lives than were ever absorbed by the cinema in a kind of dream world, particularly when the practice eats into the time when they should be busy over their homework. It is not far-fetched to suspect that this must produce a certain flabbiness of the mental muscles at a time when it is peculiarly necessary for them to be tautened up.

IT was with these impressions in mind that I began to question the people who were obviously most nearly concerned in this matter—the school teachers. Naturally I supposed that their reaction would be definitely adverse. To my great surprise it was nothing of the kind, but varied from indifference to active approval. Though I heard nothing quite so high-pitched as the encomia of Father Pichard, the creator of religious broadcasting for French television ("Through television we leave the age of the book, to enter the civilization of the incarnate word"!!!) there seemed to be much support for the view that television, quite apart from actual transmission to schools, acted through its talks and discussions as a positive force in education. Even in the crucial matter of television's interference with home tasks I found a tendency to play the matter down.

This contrast between the pessimistic implications of the various surveys and learned articles on the one hand and what the school teachers actually said on the other was extraordinary. There are, of course, various explanations. One of them may well be that school teachers, though immensely dedicated people, are only human and are reluctant to decry the effects of television viewing, a pastime from which they themselves often derive much legitimate pleasure.

There is, however, a much simpler explanation. No doubt many young children engage in excessive viewing—indeed this often suits parental convenience all too well—but the surveys clearly show that when they grow older and acquire more independence, they definitely seem to prefer other pursuits. It is indeed possible that many children are getting such a dose of viewing in their early years that they will be indifferent to it when they grow up. Quite conceivably, there might as a result be a decline in television audiences ten or fifteen years from now.

In actual fact, however, the danger of T.V. seems more imaginary than real. The truth is, as Mr. Gorer has discovered—and I believe his discovery to be original—that for some reason, possibly the small size of the screen, people simply do not get emotionally involved by television in the way they get involved, say, by the movies. During Mr. Gorer's survey it was found, for instance, that not a single person could give the name of any individual performer—even in that person's "favorite" program—except in the cases where such a name was mentioned in the program's title.

I could, had I the space, give numerous instances of this strangely superficial effect of T.V. and of the way people sometimes sit for hours before a screen without properly taking in what is going on there. One of the surveys refers to large numbers of very young children solemnly sitting through lengthy performances of "The Master Builder" and "Death of a Salesman," for example.

And the curious failure of television to penetrate to the deeper recesses of the personality seems well exemplified by what happened here last year when two separate individuals, Lord Altrincham and Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge, each made journalistic criticisms of British royalty. In England this is obviously a very dangerous thing to do.

Lord Altrincham (of whom most Britons had never heard) is the editor of a Tory monthly of modest circulation (which most of us have never read), while Mr. Muggeridge was the editor—and transformer—of *Punch* and enjoyed a position of unquestionable eminence in the world of intelligent journalism. What is more important is that Mr. Muggeridge had on innumerable occasions appeared on television, where his wit, pleasant voice and agreeable personality were a joy to listen to and watch. If the words "Television Personality" applied to anybody in England, they applied to Mr. Muggeridge.

In these circumstances Mr. Muggeridge ought clearly to have drawn the heaviest fire, for though titles still count for something in England, they really do not count for very much. Moreover, Mr. Muggeridge had qualified in a special manner of his own for vituperation; he published his observations in the *Saturday Evening Post* and received a check that was both large and widely publicized, thus introducing the element of the Judas price.

However, it all worked out quite differently. Lord Altrincham received over two thousand letters, the majority abusive and some quite incredibly obscene. In addition, he had his face smacked—which seemed to add an engaging period touch to the whole affair. As against this ample harvest, however, all poor Mr. Muggeridge's mail bag could show in the way of letters, obscene or otherwise, was a beggarly one hundred and twenty-five. Such wraithlike and unsubstantial creatures are the prophets of the television screen. Even when they offend, and do so grievously, they are not considered worth stoning.

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I HAVE KEPT till last what is perhaps the most serious, though the most indirect way in which television may be working against the schools. Sociologists are telling us that there is at the moment a recognizable tendency for unskilled labor to form what they call a distinctive "sub-culture" of its own, and that this "sub-culture" has its own codes and values which are alien and even hostile to those of the broader surrounding culture. Much of the increase in juvenile crime tends to be diagnosed as an expression of that hostility. This sub-culture or way of life—call it what you will—is, they say, becoming more self-assured, more conscious of its own essential "rightness." Two causes seem to be operating to produce this result. One is the narrowing differential between skilled and unskilled labor; the other is television—or rather the possession of a television set; for this fills what had hitherto been a vacuum and breeds a certain contentment with things as they are and a corresponding resistance to any change in established mores.

Now this fact is liable to hit the schools very hard and at a very critical time. Until recently, Britain's educational revolution has been chiefly concerned with the salvaging of exceptional talent. Outstandingly able children are syphoned off into so-called grammar schools, from where the best of them go on to university —at the public charge, if necessary. This process, however, has gone about as far as it can go, and the main effort is now being directed towards the crucial task of raising average standards.

At present school attendance is compulsory up to the age of fifteen, but children who wish to do so can now continue their education for one or even sometimes for two years —a privilege until recently available only in the grammar schools. The provision of teachers and accommodation is still something of a problem, but it looks as if it is going to be a far greater problem to persuade parents to let their children make use of such facilities as are available. In many areas school teachers are knocking at doors in their spare time and wearing out shoe leather in their arduous efforts to fill what might otherwise be empty benches.

Where unskilled labor is strongly represented, these teachers meet with considerable resistance. There is in such places a strong tradition that youngsters should go to work at fifteen, and people do not see why it should be broken—certainly not for what the school can offer. As a result throughout the nation only about a quarter of the children concerned are enrolling for the extra year.

Yet there do seem to be forces which can break this apathy. There has been a steady effort over the past ten years to move people from large, overcrowded cities into self-sufficient satellite communities. In these the proportion of children continuing for an extra year seems to be substantially higher.

In one such community which I visited, the figure attained was nearly fifty per cent, though there was certainly a preponderance of unskilled labor and the families had obviously brought their television sets along with them—I saw the telltale aerial on five houses out of six. Of course, people who are ready to pull up their stakes and transfer themselves to a new environment can reasonably be considered more enterprising than the average, but I am satisfied that there is more to it than that. When people are transferred into civilized and agreeable surroundings, something gets into them—either the grace of God or an enhanced desire to keep up with the Joneses, or possibly a mixture of the two.

Another factor is also involved. In a small compact community of this kind the school seems to exercise a remarkably pervasive influence on people of all ages. In the town I visited the school was a remarkably fine structure of steel and glass, surrounded by acres of playing fields. It seemed almost physically to dominate the place, and I was not surprised to hear that whenever the principal calls a parents' meeting the attendance is quite astonishing. I believe a new social force has come into being here of which we have as yet taken inadequate cognizance.

That television is at the moment a mildly anti-intellectual force and educationally a mildly regressive influence cannot, I think, be wholly denied, despite what the teachers say. But the servitude it lays upon us is extremely light, and if strong positive influences are brought to bear, it can be pretty easily lifted. Indeed, in so far as it spurs educational authorities to fresh efforts, it may in a mild sort of way provide a fair example of Toynbeean challenge and response.

For the time being, however, the thing is something of a problem. Since it is for the reasons stated at the beginning of this article rather more urgent for Britain to find a solution to it than for anybody else, we may to some extent act in this matter as a pilot study for the rest of the world. From what I have seen I do not despair of our success.

APPEALS FOR BOOKS

A reader writes that St. Joseph's College on the Rio Grande, Albuquerque, N. M., in the historic Archdiocese of Santa Fe, needs books for its new library, particularly for material relevant to the liberal arts. The Niels Steensens Library, Bredgade 67, Copenhagen, Denmark, asks for books "that will help our non-Catholic Danish friends gain a better understanding of the Faith." (Packages should be marked "printed matter—gift.") Rev. C. X. Duraisamy, a native missionary priest, also asks for books. His address: Kalithanampettai, Alangudi-Mahajanam Post, Via Pullambadi, Grichy District, South India.

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AS YOU WERE SAYING

A COLUMN like this one, which wanders all over the lot and is as opinionated as they come, elicits more back-talk than The Commonweal's Communications department can find room for. Here are some excerpts from recent letters on a variety of subjects.

* * *

"If, as you say, the 1960 election may be the first big test for a Catholic candidate in a new America, I fear the worst. This fear stems from my deep misgivings about Senator Kennedy as the candidate. . . . He will lose not only the anti-Catholic vote but also the 'more rational' vote of many persons who will vote against him regardless of his faith. Time will obliterate this distinction; history will recall his candidacy as the failure of another Catholic candidate. This, I submit, would be tragic. I hope we do not tempt history with Senator Kennedy."

* * *

"You indicated that American Catholics are within the Anglo-Saxon tradition. I fervently hope not. We are in a tradition which can be specified as German-Gaelic-Slavonic-Latin. . . . American Catholics have a great role, yes; but it will be achieved only by steering clear of the Anglo-Saxon tradition and the heterodox tendency which belongs to its essence. The Catholic spirit can not be exercised through the human (I was about to say diabolic) wisdom of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The Anglo-Saxon spirit must be excised almost entirely. A purgation from its influence is needed. One element is excepted. That has to do with English law; or more precisely, regard and respect for law and the observance thereof. This is a valuable Anglo-Saxon contribution to America which is not yet completely destroyed in our land."

* * *

" 'I know the reason you guys don't want the vernacular Mass,' our Homiletics professor cracks, 'You're scared of falling on your faces. You may be able to get away with botching the Latin the way you do, but with English you'd all be dead ducks and you know it.' More truth than flippancy, God help us!"

* * *

"There are two arguments for Latin which you did not mention. . . . 1. The expressing of theological terms in other languages would be more of a task than is generally realized. 2. The problem of national churches. A comparison between the Eastern and the Roman Church will, I am sure, give you a true picture of what a diversity of languages and liturgies can lead to."

"This [use of Latin] is an infuriating situation. Really amounts to a radical perversion of the whole religious structure of dialogue and communion. One can appreciate the reaction of the man in the pew. But that vast, restless, hopeful agitation behind the priest at the altar can also be frustrating. . . . An occasional intelligent squawk can do no harm."

* * *

"The poor old Latin language comes in for a tremendous amount of blame that I believe should be placed squarely on ignorance of the use of the missal. . . . I will have to retreat a bit. I understand there are certain parts of the world (China comes to mind) in which the sound of Latin is unrecognizable. It has been suggested, and I concur, that Latin should be changed to some other basic language under these circumstances. Again, however, the two-language missal should be standard. Otherwise I feel there would be divisiveness gradually separating the vernacular groups."

* * *

" 'Obvious' is the proper word to describe the case for the vernacular. The self-evident can not be proven. . . . The solution is for the people to make their feelings known. Catholics have too little trust in the fact that although the structure of the Church is authoritarian, the Church is a dynamic democracy—dependent on articulate and interested members."

* * *

"An American court, I think, would not even consider the religious issue in the Prato case. And, indeed, under our system there would be no need for it to do so. There would be two questions to be answered by the jury: (1) Was the butcher defamed by the Bishop, and (2) did that defamation result in material damage to him? The fact that the slander took place in a church would be of no more significance than if it had taken place in a saloon or at an anti-vivisectionist meeting. The Church does not and has never enjoyed a privileged position in the eyes of the law. . . ."

* * *

"Never in the history of Christianity has the Christian religion been under such an intellectual attack as it is at the present time. We have more fine minds, more learning pitted against us than ever before in history. To meet this intellectual challenge is not easy. It needs time and learning, and who can find the time and acquire the learning in this restless world? We are not losing because we lack knowledge or brains but because of the indifference of Catholics to the Faith."

JOHN COGLEY.

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CAUGHT IN A VICIOUS CIRCLE

Railroads in Crisis

by LAWRENCE T. KING

THE RECENT discontinuation of all passenger service between Baltimore and New York City by the historic Baltimore & Ohio Railroad dramatizes the declining fortunes of the country's railroads. At the turn of the century, railroads carried eighty-four per cent of all inter-city travelers. Today the figure is four per cent, and during the past twelve years railroads have incurred a combined deficit of seven billion dollars from passenger traffic. This has set in motion a vicious circle—constant cutbacks in service, higher rates and loss of passengers to other means of transportation. The net result has been steadily diminishing revenue in the face of mounting operating costs.

Under these conditions, many railroads would like to discontinue passenger operations altogether and concentrate on freight, which now provides the income offsetting a good part of the tremendous passenger traffic losses. There is little likelihood of this, however, since railroads are chartered under federal and state laws as public carriers and are therefore required to maintain passenger service or get out of business altogether, unless they can prove—as did the B & O—that the public interests can be served adequately by existing lines.

The plight of the railroads has now reached the halls of Congress and the White House. A Senate subcommittee under the chairmanship of Senator Smathers of Florida recently completed ten weeks of hearings on the subject and has recommended legislation to repeal the ten per cent wartime excise tax on passenger fares and the three per cent freight levy, a government loan to meet rising costs, and a faster tax write-off period on new equipment. From the White House has come a proposal for Congressional approval of a 700-million-dollar government loan to the railroads.

These measures have been welcomed with open arms by the industry, but few railroad men actually believe they will solve the railroads' long-range problems. The trouble, they maintain, lies directly at the door of government: over-regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission and the various state regulatory agencies which hold the railroads in the bondage of antiquated laws, enacted at a time when they held a virtual monopoly in the field of inter-city transportation.

Industry spokesmen also contend that the railroads are taxed unfairly in comparison with competing means of transportation. They cite, for example, the thirteen million dollars in taxes annually levied against New York's Grand Central and Penn Stations and their approaches. They point out that competing truck and bus systems use public highways financed with tax funds and that airlines are the beneficiaries of terminal facilities built with public money. Railroads are required to maintain their roadbeds and rights of way out of their own revenue. In effect, the railroads charge, they are being taxed to subsidize their competitors.

THERE IS A good deal of historical irony in this debate on public aid. After the Civil War, when the energies of Americans were absorbed in "the winning of the West," the railroad was projected as the instrument which would enable the nation to achieve its Manifest Destiny. As early as 1853, Senator Thomas Benton had urged Congress to build a railroad to the Pacific as a national undertaking, ownership to remain in the hands of the government, which would let out contracts for its operation to private companies at mutually satisfactory terms. His proposal was opposed by Stephen Douglas, whose eloquence soon convinced everyone that the project should be undertaken and carried out in the name of private enterprise.

But how could private enterprise be induced to risk its capital in a nebulous venture across what then was known as the "great American Desert?" Congress solved the problem of providing the inducement: detachment from the public domain of millions of acres of land—not only the rights of way but miles of land on both sides of the track lines—to the railroad builders. In all, 158,293,000 acres of land, including timber and mineral rights, were involved.

The task of converting this vast empire into operating capital required time, however, and the railroads required immediate incentives. These too were granted,

Mr. King is a California newspaperman who contributes frequently to this magazine.

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in the form of bond issues underwritten by local, state or national government and turned over to the rail companies. William Z. Ripley, an authority in the field, estimates that three-fifths of the cost of building railroads during this era was borne by government.

In that feverish era of empire-building, of course, no one was unduly concerned with the cost or the fact that it spawned a new class of millionaires—the railroad moguls—who were to dominate American economic life for the rest of the century. It was not until the 1870's that the American public awoke to the realization that they had been mortgaged to the railroads.

For instance, the Southern Pacific's terms for running its line to the village of Los Angeles, with a population of six thousand, included payment of $377,000 in cash (through an issue of municipal bonds), sixty acres of ground for a depot, control of the existing short-run Los Angeles & San Pedro Railroad, and five per cent of the annual assessed valuation of all of Los Angeles County—which amounted to a direct levy of $100 on every man, woman and child, including the local Indian population.

Throughout the West, the railroads controlled not only the vital flow of immigration and goods from the East but also most of the desirable land. The high-handed manner in which the railroad magnates held the agricultural West in bondage—wheat purchased by the rail interests for fifty cents a bushel, for example, was sold on the open market in New York for $1.25 a bushel—touched off a series of agrarian revolts which led to the formation of the Grange and its campaign for government regulation. In fact, many went so far as to demand that the government take over the railroads lock, stock and barrel. The fear of nationalization has haunted the industry ever since.

When the Interstate Commerce Act was finally passed in 1887, Collis Huntington, the California rail tycoon, exclaimed, "The agrarians have their law, but we have the railroads."

The purpose of the act was to foster competition by forbidding rebates, a device often used with impunity to favor certain shipping interests at the expense of others, pooling for maintenance of rates, and combinations to prevent continuous carriage of freight. It also decreed that all charges must be reasonable and just and that rate schedules must be public and not changed without due notice. It created the Interstate Commerce Commission to administer the law and set up penalties for violations. As it stood the law was quite innocuous—historian Charles Beard called it a "scarecrow"—compared to present legislation.

In fact, it was the failure of the 1887 act to control rates effectively—while banning the collusive practices that enabled railroads to act in their own best interests—that made the industry realize that if the carriers were to be subject to governmental controls they must be effective controls. The various railroad empires had grown huge and complex, billions of dollars were invested in them, and tens of thousands of workers were on their payrolls. Unrestricted competition, especially between parallel lines, threatened the existence of even the biggest systems.

In 1888, for example, gross earnings increased greatly, but there was a dangerous decline in the earnings of the great systems. Under the leadership of Pierpont Morgan, who controlled most of the banking interests of his day, some attempt was made to impose a measure of control from within. But it was an era of rugged individualism, and Morgan's efforts at arriving at a community of interests among railroad men did not work out satisfactorily.

It was not until 1920 that the I.C.C. was given jurisdiction over rates and expansion and curtailment of service, the authority long needed to make governmental control effective. Did this new regulatory power hurt the railroads? A year later—in 1921—a billion passengers were carried by railroads, a figure never before or since equaled, and car loadings soared to new heights. Freed from the competitive rate jungle, the railroads were now able to concentrate on improving service and putting their internal affairs in order.

THE PRESENT financial plight of the railroads, however, has led many to cast the I.C.C. in the role of a national villain. *Life,* in an editorial entitled "How to Save the Railroads," put it frankly: "Numbed by years of regulation and also by fear of rate wars with each other, the railroads refuse to make the one proposal that would dramatize their problem. Well, we hereby make it for them: abolish the I.C.C. altogether, at least as far as its rate-making power is concerned."

To railroad spokesmen this suggestion may well have been received with the prayer, "Lord, save me from my friends; I can take care of my enemies." The dozens of railroad executives who testified before the Smathers' subcommittee made it clear that they had no desire to be freed from all federal regulation. In fact, they let it be known that they are definitely opposed to any suggestion that the I.C.C. surrender its rate-making power. As one spokesman put it: "The railroad industry does not realize its own economic potential. If it were suddenly freed from all governmental restraint and regulation and permitted once again to engage in unrestricted competition, it would soon bring the entire industry crashing down upon its head."

The railroads' complaint is not with regulation, but with what they term "over-regulation." As an example, they cite the fact that the I.C.C. evaluates its rate requests in relation to the rate structures of competing truck and barge lines, and consequently they are not

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permitted to set their rates low enough to win back traffic they have lost to these competitors. In short, the railroads want the I.C.C. to consider each rate request on its own merits rather than its effect upon other means of transportation.

This does not mean the railroads are completely happy with the way the I.C.C. handles its own rate applications, but it does mean they recognize the necessity of the commission's rate-making power, although their motives may not be altruistic. "In the absence of the I.C.C.," a Chicago rail president told the Associated Press, "the state commissions would tear us to pieces."

Despite the current tendency to emphasize the ascendancy of the newer modes of transportation and to write an obituary for the railroads, most transportation experts are convinced that twenty years from now the railroads will still be needed because the American economy cannot operate without them. They point out that railroads can carry ninety-one million tons of freight compared to the trucking industry's total capacity of twelve million tons; that passenger trains have a seating capacity of 1,100,000, while the capacity of all inter-city buses is only 518,000; and that of all the airlines only 59,800. They further maintain that the railroad remains the cheapest and best system ever devised for the mass movement of freight and passengers over long distances.

Since all agree on the necessity of keeping the nations' railroads running at maximum efficiency, the paramount question boils down to this: Who will be running the railroads twenty years from now? If the railroads are unable to solve their present financial plight, the only alternative is government operation.

IT IS GENERALLY recognized that the prerequisite for survival of the railroads under their present managements is improvement of service. According to the Smather's subcommittee, they have been derelict in this regard: "There has been a failure to recognize changing conditions, times and tastes; a failure to compete aggressively for business by use of modern equipment and by adjustments in plants and financial structures."

In their preoccupation with competition from airlines, buses and trucks, the railroads seem to have minimized the fact that their greatest competitor is the private automobile. Today, railroads carry four per cent of all inter-city travelers; buses and airlines handle the same amount—and eighty-eight per cent go by private automobile. In the passenger field, then, the railroads' problem is not so much one of winning travelers away from buses and airlines as it is in providing the type of service and rates that will induce the American public to leave their autos at home and go by rail on their inter-city trips.

John W. Barringer, president of the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie, has proposed a modernization plan that would enable the railroads to offer twelve-hour service between New York and Chicago and forty-two-hour trips from coast to coast. His plan calls for elimination of out-moded terminals, utilization of automatic classification yards and centralized traffic control, and abandonment of time and fuel-wasting grades by greater use of tunnels. He is convinced that such a program would enable the railroads to reduce operating expenses drastically and offer fares that would attract millions of new passengers.

As for financing, Barringer estimates that the program, spread over ten years, would cost about twenty billion dollars, of which half would come from the industry's internal resources. The rest would come from the sale of six billion dollars in equipment trust certificates and the sale of four billion dollars' worth of new railway stocks and bonds.

Barringer's plan is one of the few put forth by railroad men to meet the challenge of the times, but at the moment few of his colleagues have evinced any serious interest in it. This is unfortunate in an industry long haunted by fears of nationalization. Someone has to run the railroads. If private interests cannot continue to do the job, then the federal government will have to do it. The industry would do well to ponder the premise that failure of private interests in the field of public service is the surest route to government control and operation—and inaction is the first step on that route.

THE SCREEN

WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?

AUDIENCES who were thoroughly chilled by "Diabolique," a French movie stemming from a novel by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejec, can now work up a few new goose pimples over "Vertigo," an American film based on the same authors' *D'entre les morts.* "Vertigo" isn't quite as terrifying as "Diabolique," but it has tremendous suspense and another involved plot. It also has the fine hand of that master director Alfred Hitchcock.

The story is about a not very bright San Francisco detective, expertly portrayed by James Stewart. Although reluctant to take on a job offered by an ex-schoolmate (Tom Helmore) to shadow his mysteriously wandering wife, the detective, who retired from the police force because of his acrophobia, gives one look at lovely, blond Kim Novak and is ready to start in pursuit. Next day she leads him on a chase—to a

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florist shop, to a mission cemetery, to an art gallery (where hangs a picture of Carlotta, the wife's beautiful but mad great grandmother who commited suicide), to an old hotel which was once Carlotta's home. Has Carlotta returned from the grave to take possession of this lovely woman? Day after day, the chase continues, until one day Jimmy is called upon to rescue Kim from the icy waters of San Francisco Bay. They become friends; wanderers both, they decide to wander together.

In a series of scenes that are somewhat reminiscent of stories by Walter De la Mare, Jim falls madly in love with this phantom-like creature. Strangely enough the detective seems to have no qualms about becoming so strongly attached to a married woman. In his efforts to free her from her obsession with the past, he even takes her to the handsome and well-preserved old Mission of San Juan Bautista. Although the inquest, which is held here after the horrible death of Helmore's wife, exonerates Stewart, he feels responsible because his acrophobia stopped him from following Kim up the bell tower. Recovering from a breakdown due to melancholy and guilt, he searches San Francisco for his lost love and mistakenly thinks he sees her again and again. One day he meets a girl who, except for her dark hair and coarse manner, looks remarkably like Kim. In a dither, he pursues her with renewed intensity.

Although the screenplay by Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor is good, one doesn't quite believe its story—but neither could one walk out on the picture. Hitchcock has given the whole thing an eerie atmosphere, and the performances, including Miss Novak's, are fine. Henry Jones is first-rate as the coroner in the gruesomely-amusing inquest scene. Perhaps the most unconventional, and ungentlemanly, thing Hitchcock does is to drop one of the leading characters: after giving a bright portrayal of an artist in love with Stewart, Barbara Bel Geddes suddenly disappears from the plot. Even more strange for a masterful story-teller like Hitchcock is his devotion to San Francisco. Never has the city been more beautifully photographed. If Stewart's problems don't win the audience to "Vertigo," the Technicolor and VistaVision views of San Francisco will.

NO DOUBT many movies turn out different from what their makers intend. Philip Dunne wrote a good script for "Ten North Frederick" from John O'Hara's novel; and he also directed the bright cast that Producer Charles Brackett assembled. But somehow the film is unsatisfactory. Most of its story is told in a long flashback at Joe Chapin's funeral, and the result is more like a synopsis than a moving drama. We see Joe, nicely played by Gary Cooper, celebrating his fiftieth birthday, getting involved in politics, watching his son and daughter mess up their lives, and experiencing a brief period of happiness when he falls in love with his daughter's roommate. His wife, played with strength and venom by Geraldine Fitzgerald, is a self-centered woman who pushes people around like pawns. Their daughter (Diane Varsi) might have found happiness in her marriage to a trumpet player from the wrong side of the tracks (Stuart Whitman) but father bought him off, so she left home in a huff. The son (Ray Strickyn) became a wastrel. At the funeral both children wonder if they loved their father, and the son tries to account for him as a gentleman in a world that has no more use for gentlemen. But this is too easy and too unsatisfactory an explanation.

Every now and then "Ten North Frederick" tries, unsuccessfully, to get the feel of locale and character that Orson Welles' "Magnificent Ambersons" achieved so well. Joe's mean wife is the villain of the piece; but why Joe should have allowed her to dominate his life and the children's is not clear. Joe is also used badly by the politicians. But were the ambitions his or only his wife's? Perhaps his goals as a gentleman and lawyer were as empty and false as those of Willy Loman, Arthur Miller's symbolic salesman.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"SPANISH CATHOLICS"

New Haven, Conn.

TO THE EDITORS: As someone acquainted with the Opus Dei and with Spanish politics, I write to protest George Dennis' distorted report of the Opus Dei as a political party in Spain [Apr. 25].

The number of inaccuracies in Mr. Dennis' article provides sufficient reason for questioning his qualifications as a commentator on "Spanish Catholics: Right, Left and Center." To list but a few: (1) he misspells the name of the founder of the Opus Dei; correctly spelled it is José Mariá Escrivá de Balaguer; (2) he misdates a decree of the Sacred Congregation by three months (3) I quote from the article: "Father Escribá [sic] wrote a book *Camino* (Road), which serves as the *Spiritual Exercises* of the Opus Dei. It was published in 1953 and was recently translated in French." Besides misspelling the founder's name, Mr. Dennis shows that he is unaware that there are two English translations of *Camino* (one Irish and one American) both of which correctly translate the title as *The Way*. Furthermore, the first Spanish edition was in 1939; since then there have been countless editions in Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian, French and even

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Braille. It would seem that if George Dennis were qualified to comment on the Catholic Church in Spain, he would not have committed mistakes such as these.

Mr. Dennis does include one quote about the Opus Dei from a reliable source—an article by a member of Opus Dei. He cites Father Julian Herranz as saying that members "enjoy complete and perfect freedom in political and economic matters." But he seems to disregard this statement for the rest of his article, relying mainly on what he calls "hostile sources."

Clearly displaying the influence of hostile sources, Mr. Dennis says that the Opus Dei started competing "for government and especially university posts" under the Republic. If one were to read Daniel Sargent's book, *God's Engineer* (the biography of Isidoro Zorzano, a member of Opus Dei who is being considered for beatification) one would realize that there were barely a dozen members of Opus Dei during the Republic. What is more, the average age of these members was about twenty-five. Such a group could hardly be expected to have had serious designs of competing for power in the universities with the Freemasons.

Turning his attention to Opus Dei's "concentrated effort to infiltrate the press," Mr. Dennis states that they "took over . . . the magazines *Actualidad Española, Nuestro Tiempo,* and *Punta Europa.*" What is actually meant by the phrase "took over" is that in one case the owners of the magazine chose members of Opus Dei to work on the editorial board and in another case Opus Dei members financed and started the magazine themselves.

I hope that my point has been made. George Dennis' representation of the Opus Dei as an underground political movement is deceptively phrased.

But then what is Opus Dei's role in Spanish politics? We must remember that Opus Dei is a religious organization which has the full approval of the Holy See. It is an organization, or more technically a secular institute, in which laymen live a life of full dedication to God. Such laymen, apostolically directed, are certain to be found in all branches and on all levels of human activity. The aim of their professional activities is personal sanctification and apostolate among the laity. This aim, coupled with "complete and perfect freedom in political and economic matters," comprises sufficient evidence to discredit any claims that the Opus Dei can be regarded as a political party—much less a Rightist group aiming to turn Spain into "an authoritarian, if not totalitarian, monarchy."

BASIL CARMODY.

Boston, Mass.

TO THE EDITORS: My attention has just been drawn to an article entitled "Spanish Catholics: Right, Left, and Center" in your issue of April 25. The pseudonymous writer of this article speaks of the "political activities of Opus Dei," "its secret methods of operation," and "tactics modeled on those of Freemasonry."

I am a member of Opus Dei and the absolute falseness of these statements moves me to write to you. Opus Dei is not a secret society and has no secret methods of operation. Neither in theory nor in practice has it any relation to the ideals or tactics of Freemasonry.

Opus Dei is a Secular Institute of the Catholic Church, approved by the Holy See. Its objects and means of operation are completely public and are known both to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities in all the dioceses and countries where the Institute works. Moreover, the members of Opus Dei make no mystery or secret about their membership in the Institute. Neither is there anything secret or mysterious about the several pontifical documents which determine the nature, spirit, aims, etc., of Opus Dei and the other Secular Institutes (Apostolic Constitution, *Provida Mater Ecclesia,* Feb. 2, 1947; Motu Proprio, *Primo Feliciter,* March 12, 1948; and the Instruction, *Cum Sanctissimus,* March 19, 1948). All of these are public documents and available to anyone who wishes to consult or study them. In fact, any person who wants to be well informed would be wise to consult them before venturing a judgment.

It is equally false to speak of "political activities" of Opus Dei—whether such activities are supposedly designed to restore an authoritarian monarchy, or any other type of regime, in Spain. Opus Dei is an exclusively religious institution. It is not a political organization, nor a mixture of a religious and political organization. Its aims are exclusively apostolic and spiritual in nature. Therefore, Opus Dei is not, and never could be, any type of political group or party. This would be repugnant to its very nature.

In purely human matters—for example politics, economics, professional affairs, etc.—the Institute does not impose on its members any particular opinion or criterion. Opus Dei is not a Religious Order, and we, its members, are not religious; we are ordinary citizens with all of the rights and all of the duties that this condition implies.

Each one of us knows full well that he has the most complete and perfect freedom of opinion, criteria, and political action. And each one follows his own convictions with the fullest freedom, acting under his personal and exclusive responsibility. He neither represents nor involves the Institute, and the Institute naturally does not stand behind or identify itself with this free activity of his.

Consequently, in Opus Dei there are men of the most varying political leanings and opinions—with the exception of those, such as Communism, which are

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opposed to Catholic moral or dogmatic teaching.

Mr. Dennis takes the concrete case of Spain. In Spain, there are members of the Institute who support General Franco. And there are others—no less well known—who have been and are in open opposition to the policy of the government: even to the point of being deprived of their public office. Also, there are thousands who take no active part in politics, although all of them maintain their own opinions with the maximum freedom—opinions which differ of necessity, seeing the great difference of their mentality, human background and formation, the varying problems of their different social environments, etc.

Personally, I can assure Mr. Dennis that I know Opus Dei members in Spain who do not support a monarchy, but whose beliefs are republican, democratic, and parliamentarian. Also, there are some who do support the monarchical idea. One may not agree with them, but surely one cannot object to their right to exercise the freedom which the Church, the State, and the Institute acknowledge as theirs.

CARL B. SCHMITT, JR.

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: In the article "Spanish Catholics: Right, Left and Center" in the April 25 issue, the book "Camino" by Msgr. Joseph M. Escriva, founder of Opus Dei, is referred to incorrectly as "Road." This spiritual book has been translated into many languages. The English translations, entitled "The Way," are published by Scepter Press, 5544 Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, Illinois ($2.50 and $2.25) and 144 Lower Baggott Street, Dublin, Ireland (11/- and 8/-).

BERNARD FRANZ,
Business Manager, Scepter Press.

A REPLY

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: I am obliged to your correspondents for pointing out errors of fact and omission contained in my article. I regret having misspelled the name of the founder of Opus Dei and can only claim in extenuation—though not in excuse—that Spanish spelling is still in the Shakespeare, Shakespear, Shakspere stage and that I have seen both "Escriba" and "Escriva" in Spanish print. I remain, however, unrepentant on the translation of *Camino*. The Spanish word means both "road" and "way." I prefer "road," since it suggests to me something of the clarity and forcefulness of the Spanish original. I did not know that the book was first published in Spanish in 1939 and not in 1953 (the date on the copy which I consulted) or that it has been translated into English, German, Italian, Portuguese and Braille as well as French. Under the circumstances I feel it is a pity that there is no copy of the book at the New York Public Library and I hope that this deficiency will soon be remedied. Nor was I aware that Opus Dei has a residence in Boston as well as Chicago. Finally, I copied the wrong date of the decree of the Sacred Congregation from the article by Guy Clairbois mentioned in the text. Which brings me to the charges of malicious comparisons with Freemasonry, use of hostile documentation, misinterpretation of "secrecy" and political involvement.

While mentioning that the opponents of Opus Dei call it "white Masonry," my own comparison was strictly confined to the matter of tactics. This is, of course, a matter in which one's reading of facts is colored by one's opinions; but having read the opinions of your correspondents, I find nothing in them to shake mine.

As for secrecy, I found very concrete evidence of it when gathering material on Opus Dei for my book on contemporary Spain. I do not think secrecy is reprehensible in itself—after all, I wrote the article under a pseudonym—and, in the concrete case of Opus Dei, I certainly did not find it impenetrable, since my informants in Spain included members of the Institute. I also feel that there are different levels of secrecy. The last impression I wanted to give is

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that of the leaders of Opus Dei spending their waking hours in a dark cellar plotting to take over the world in the manner of the mythical Wise Men of Zion. But when a decree of the Sacred Congregation sanctions secret operations, this is surely acceptable proof of the existence of secrecy of a more serious kind.

I have used both hostile and friendly sources. I have quoted from the latter, including Monsignor Escrivá himself, Father Herranz and Señor Santillan, and have mentioned the Vatican documents sanctioning the existence of Opus Dei and its operations. Wherever I have quoted from hostile sources, I have indicated this, so that the reader might make due allowance. I have given as detailed references as possible to both kinds of sources—so that the interested reader can look them up for himself.

I have no doubt that Opus Dei is primarily a religious organization and I have tried to describe its religious functions in terms not very different from those used by your correspondents. But I have equally no doubt that Opus Dei is now deeply involved in Spanish politics. I do not mean by this that the Institute as such supports General Franco and his regime—I have quoted Father Herranz and Señor Santillan on this—but I do mean that individual members have taken increasing part in the politics of Spain. And, while some members may be found on the opposite side, enough of them have become part and parcel of General Franco's government on all levels up to the ministerial to convince many Spaniards and interested foreigners that the weight of Opus Dei is thrown behind the regime. In support of this view I have quoted a number of facts, from the attack of Rafael Calvo Serer on the then Minister of Education and Rector of Madrid University to "Report number 15" and the ensuing arrests, showing progressive involvement in Spanish politics on General Franco's side. None of these facts is challenged by your correspondents, or indeed mentioned by them. Until they are challenged by evidence that I find acceptable I have no alternative except to stick to my view.

GEORGE DENNIS.

BOOKS

Random Pieces from an Eminent Career

AFTERNOON OF AN AUTHOR. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. Scribner. $4.50.

By RICHARD L. SCHOENWALD

THESE PIECES, rescued from the files of the *Saturday Evening Post,* the *Century Magazine,* the *Bookman, College Humor,* the *Princeton Alumni Weekly,* and *Esquire,* ask for an interpretation which will give them significance. As bits out of a man's life they have no meaning. A real understanding of that man's "great" or "good" or "famous" work will account also for these "commercial" or "occasional" or "less good" efforts.

Arthur Mizener, who has supplied an introduction for the volume and a note for each item, has not furnished a hypothesis which transforms curious yellowed pages by bringing order into what they reveal. Here, as in his biography of Fitzgerald, he has done a praiseworthy job of gathering material, but he places what he has found before the reader with little pattern or focus.

This collection first appeared last year, privately printed by the Friends of the Princeton University Library. The trade edition duplicates the earlier version but omits almost all of the photographs which it contained. The pictures suggest a way to understanding. They show an adolescent Fitzgerald acting in a costume play he had written, Fitzgerald the prep school football player, the Princeton undergraduate, the soldier—though only an aide who "didn't get over" — the moneyed writer in Europe, the writer back in the States broken physically and financially, but not artistically or in essential morals. Fitzgerald's life, begun in wholeness and confident expectation, finished in crack-up and a tortured patching together. Such a progression resembles the range of what is reprinted here, from Basil Duke Lee, hopeful but puzzled on the edge of adult awareness, to Pat Hobby, the pathetic Hollywood agent in the late

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thirties who knows too much about the world's ways and surrenders himself to that knowledge.

The young Fitzgerald had believed that his world would endure forever. There might be stumbling blocks; the way onward and upward for a Catholic boy from the Midwest would open out, however, to a fellow with luck and drive. The war and the twenties smashed the easy assurance; every object, every man might still have a price, but the rates of exchange swung wildly, and at times disappeared completely, leaving bewildered individuals floundering.

Fitzgerald is a writer of this century. He lived the modern collapse. Fractures inside him duplicated breaks in his world; stresses torturing him scarred a whole culture. If he had only suffered, he would be forgotten now, like so many others who struggle and then vanish. But he had a talent, he watched himself suffering and reported his observations: "if you weren't able to function in action you might at least be able to tell about it. . . ."

His metaphors and images have a haunting, piercing quality in this book, just as they do in his better known novels and stories. That style came from deep inside, rising to the daytime world of readers and bookstores through fissures in him. Earlier in the twentieth century, under a picture of a woman screaming in anguish, Edvard Munch had written, "I felt a great cry throughout nature." In his picture the complacent passersby do not hear the scream, but the viewer knows that they cannot deny it much longer. Both Munch and Fitzgerald expressed the realization that an era and its people were breaking up. Each had discovered the future beneath the surface of the present by scanning his own psyche.

It is good to have *Afternoon of an Author;* too much by Fitzgerald still lies scattered in magazines. He needs to be read and understood in all his fullness. One explanation or another may be faulty, but they must be advanced and tested by his complete achievement. The volume of his production and the number of drafts a story passed through show that he did work very hard. He regarded himself as a professional writer. From the wreckage of the nineteenth century he had taken its insistence on work, and by dramatizing his vision of the age which he found within himself he gained a victory which transcended creditors and sickness.

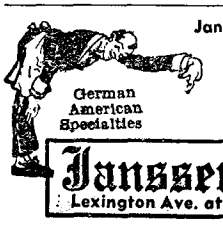
Prizewinners

PRIZE STORIES 1958: The O. Henry Awards. Selected and edited by Paul Engle & Curt Harnack. Doubleday. $3.95.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

OF this year's seventeen O. Henry Awards choices not many number among the seasoned dependables—Jean Stafford, Edward Newhouse, Hortense Calisher, Nancy Hale, Elizabeth Enright; the rest are out for their spurs. Concerning these latter a few lines are offered, and it is something to note that all, with but two holdouts, are married. Beyond that there is no sign of a trend.

In their work—which appears in little and big magazines—there is less talented competence than competent talent. They are more interested in projecting situations than telling stories, but the prose has more substance than the purely decorative mood-lighting that has been the be-all of short-of-story fiction over the last ten and more years. Yet it bears symptoms of the generally slowing blood in American writing. There is no heightening of natural proportions, naught of experimentation, none save the politest individuality. (There may be a slightly *outré* note in the story of the exurbanite who reads Gandhi.) These authors all have a painteresque eye, yet dispense too much tacky dialogue.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As has been known to occur in past prize anthologies, the three winners in this group are not among the best. That Martha Gellhorn's "In Sickness as in Health" should pull the top award seems an unabashed canard in view of its not being a short story at all, but the first part of a novel scheduled for publication before this collection went into print. It is a rather fiendish commiseration of the plight of a middle-aging man who has been materially and psychodynamically ravished by an invalid asthmatic wife.

Hortense Calisher came in second with a flashy bit of feminine spleen, "What a Thing, to Keep a Wolf in a Cage!" Miss Calisher is one of those distaff mannerists who affect a brusque thrust only to impale their victims on a mousy commonplace. With due respect to the elliptical polish and dry insinuation, their cagey technique is as subtle as lapidation, for with the victims they choose they can seldom miss. Here Miss Calisher is on the prowl of a Hollywood ex-goddess who in the glare of her own frazzled dazzle is aprowl in Rome.

The third winner is George Steiner's "The Deeps of the Sea." Mr. Steiner is to be commended for handling with reserve a theme calculated to go careening overboard with unassimilated nautical imagery, yet he can't stop the echoes from bouncing. This yarn about a merchant seaman obsessed with visions of his soul descending through the chasms has a creaky sort of "timelessness" that is not necessarily on its side.

Jean Stafford's "My Blithe, Sad Bird" is a gracefully nuanced reminiscence of scenic Heidelberg prewar and postwar, and of the strange, oddly colorful, faintly scary affectionate bond between an impoverished baroness and a much younger Texan oil heir. Just as the wistfulness of the narration is almost sealed, the narrator sets a double-focus that lends a supple modulation to the story. While excessive scenery takes some of the teeth from the suspense of Peter Matthiessen's "Travelin' Man," this tale of a Negro fugitive stalked in the Carolina swamps communicates a sense of the courage of despair.

Robin White's "First Voice" is a droll and goodhumored little parable commonsensically arguing that West remains West in the East even under the spell of yoga, and that there are no three-day wonder Sannyasis. Robert Granat elects to reverse this theme in "My Apples," but in the end Gandhi seems to make a stronger showing in the farmlands of New Mexico. Edward Newhouse in his "The Ambassador" matches the sophisticated respectability of a U. S. suburban home against the undeceived opportunism of a Hungarian D.P., showing himself frankly perceptive and the best dialoguer in the lot.

Racism bares its gums in Leo Litwak's "The Making of a Clerk" and Herbert Wilner's "The Passion for Silver's Arm," in both instances articulated with a drawl and depicted properly as a multiple passion. In the former it arises out of an atmosphere of barracks bestiality where the scapegoat for general frustrations is an unfortunate bookish recruit. It is grim and terrifying until a pretense at "conclusion" makes the plot look undressed. The latter piece, attempting to communicate the inner violence of the racist, is too truncated, too coy with verbiage, but it derives from a more imaginative curiosity.

As a Child

THE STARS GROW PALE. By Karl Bjarnhof. Knopf. $4.

By ALICE ELLEN MAYHEW

THOSE WHO have declared a permanent truce with the literature of the young as artist (more often, unfortunately, a portrait of the young as artistic) will have good reason to temper their view. Karl Bjarnhof, the blind Danish cellist, has written a memoir of a child's seduction by beauty—the false starts, the isolation, the well-springs of loneliness as a vocation, the artist's painful choice of

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the beautiful, the child's bewilderment at such an election—that stands outside of any literary cult. It is a work of art. Mr. Bjarnhof describes the three main rhythms of his childhood. At home there are silences that might last for days; it is a place where stillness seeped out of the walls and could be natural or oppressive, where the mother was fretful and burdened and the father was given to fits of melancholia. There was the outside world, a place of mockery and rejection where he was inept and with which he was losing visual contact. Finally there was the world within himself. This was another city that was to be constructed by wit and imagination out of the paling marvels of the outside world.

At home his mother told him not to be awkward and to try to be like other people. But "it was too difficult to explain." He was haunted by a deep disgrace, by an awful impotence, stumbling about in rage when he was with others but storing up the sights and scenes and harmonies within himself that could be called forth again. He was still alive to the world of color: fields bright yellow with dandelions, meadows full of white flowers that breathed on him as he passed, the fjord with its belts of green and black shadows, and, at night, in bed, he could see through the skylight the blue glimmer of the night and a star in each of the panes. The child was conscious of the peculiarity of his eyes and there were trips to the specialist after a long delay. There was a verdict, first, of structural defect but no cause for alarm. (But no one could know that Karl had memorized the chart.) More specialists, even to Copenhagen, an operation, temporary arrest of the disease and finally there was the suspense as he hung between light and darkness, childhood and manhood. But eventually, "I was overtaken by the fog . . . It rose up from the snow around the ponds, up out of the ice, and at last it seemed to come out of my eyes. Fog. Thick, dense, impenetrable fog on all sides."

But, by that time, there was another world to substitute for the one he was losing. He had gone around seeing and now, when there were no more stars for him to see, but only the vast, dark sky, he could see it all in his mind, sharply and clearly. He had not been without his companions in these dimming days. His mother prayed for a miracle and for the strength to bear burdens; his father, roused from his morose silence, took him out one night to see the woods and the snow and the stars; his quiet and grave sister, all tenderness, touching him with her lips gave a silken kiss; rebellious, hard-drinking Uncle Anton talked of long journeys to see

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mountains with snow, pyramids and hippopotamuses and to talk to Negroes, Malays and Chinese; Stougart is a drunkard but a good companion in the woods. It was as if everybody was trying to hold him back by talk.

And there was music. The child was encouraged when he showed unusual talent and, as he progressed in technique, all of his sensitivity and imagination was brought to bear on its exercise. Mr. Bjarnhof's account of his first concert, the initiation into the world that was to be his, is one of the most beautiful descriptions of an aesthetic experience I have ever read. "It was a suspense so great and so acute that nobody dared breathe. It was resolved at last in a chord . . . The sound that lingered after it, the echo, felt like a kind of weeping in one's chest. A weeping that could not be wept. . . . But I sat there hearing and seeing and living it, growing tired, and then living it again. . . . I sat there with a feeling of being carried up and up—of floating over an unknown land, a land of marvels where anything could happen."

One of the most fascinating parts of this story is the implacable realism with which the child accepts his destiny. He goes to the Blind Home near his town to take lessons in Braille. He knows the people there are blind and that he will be blind. But he hadn't known they couldn't see! When he discovers that his is an absolute and impenetrable sentence, a cold chill passes over the reader but, somehow, the child finds the inner strength to look forward, refusing to weep the weeping in his breast. When he finally leaves for the Royal Institute for the Blind to continue his studies, there is not only poignance but hope.

REVIEWERS

Richard L. Schoenwald is a member of the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

William Dunlea, a regular contributor, is a New York writer and critic.

Alice Ellen Mayhew reads and analyzes manuscripts on a free-lance basis.

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